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STATE FOR AF FRAZER AND THOMPSON AND AF/S; DRL FOR LOWENKRON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/23/2017

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [AO](#)

SUBJECT: ANGOLA: EVENTS SURROUNDING DETENTION OF GLOBAL  
WITNESS ACTIVIST DR. SARAH WYKES

REF: LUANDA 172

Classified By: Amb. Cynthia Efird for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (SBU) With reference to the arrest and detention of Dr. Sarah Wykes, of the Global Witness NGO, Embassy Luanda has compiled the following chronological outline of events, which we hope will present the facts and clear up some misperceptions of the train of events.

12. (C) Chronology of Events:

Wednesday February 14, 2007

-- Dr. Sara Wykes meets with Ambassador and DCM, US Embassy Luanda

Friday, February 16, 2007

-- Dr. Wykes travels to Cabinda

Saturday, February 17, 2007

PM

-- Dr. Sarah Wykes, accompanied by local activists and former members of the group Mpalabanda, visits and photographs social projects in Cabinda which were constructed/carried out with oil revenue money. Note: It is illegal in Angola to photograph government buildings according to law. In addition, according to the August 2006 Memorandum of Peace and Understanding (MOU) for Cabinda, Mpalabanda was declared an unregistered political entity and was ordered to disband. Mpalabanda refuses to accept the 2006 MOU and has publicly disassociated itself from the umbrella organization to which it had previously belonged that negotiated the deal. End note.

Dr. Wykes is questioned by police in Cabinda for about 30 minutes.

Sunday, February 18, 2007

5:30 AM -- Police arrive at Dr. Wykes, hotel room to question her. She calls a well-known Angolan human rights lawyer, David Mendes, who had traveled to Cabinda with her for advice. Upon his arrival, she opens the door to the police.

-- Dr. Wykes taken to Police Station; camera is seized by police.

PM

8:30 PM -- British Ambassador calls Ambassador Efird

-- Ambassador Efird calls Vice Minister of External Relations, Jorge Chicoty, to advise him on the situation and

international interest in the situation. Amb. Efird requests his intervention in securing her immediate release.

Monday, February 19, 2007

AM

9:20 -- Ambassador Efird intervenes with US company to secure transport to Cabinda for British Consular Officer

-- Dr. Wykes arraigned and bail figure estimate released ) 18,000 kwanza (approximately 2,250 USD).

PM

-- British Embassy and US Embassy consult throughout the day; US Embassy also offers help in logistical arrangements to transfer bail money from Luanda to Cabinda.

-- British Consul arrives in Cabinda and is granted immediate consular access to Dr. Wykes

-- British Embassy, while responding to early radio interviews, has not issued press statements due to the fact that this is a consular case.

Tuesday, February 20, 2007 ) Angolan National Holiday

-- Banks closed due to national holiday. Thus, bail can not be deposited nor can subsequent paperwork be completed.

-- Dr. Wykes remains in jail in cell with one other detainee. Local human rights activists request, and are accorded, as a courtesy, the ability to monitor her treatment from an adjoining cell.

-- British Consul returns to Luanda

Wednesday, February 21, 2007

13:30 -- Dr. Wykes released from jail in Cabinda.

-- Passport returned to Dr. Wykes

-- US Embassy personnel in direct contact with British Embassy throughout the day and meet with British DCM for a debrief of the situation

Thursday, February 22, 2007

AM

-- Faxed letter from Senators Leahy et al arrives Embassy Luanda with a cover letter to Ambassador Efird praising Embassy Luanda's interventions and requesting that their letter of concern be forwarded to President dos Santos.

-- Diplomatic Notes 030 and 031 delivered to the MIREX for transmission to the President and Attorney General per Senator Leahy's request

PM

-- Dr. Wykes meets with Cabindan Attorney General

-- Attorney David Mendes travels to Luanda to submit papers requesting permission for Dr. Wykes to respond to the court proceedings in Cabinda from outside the province. This would allow for her to leave Cabinda and Angola.

-- British DCM advises Embassy that he has spoken to Dr. Wykes at least six times during the day and that she is in good health, calm, and in the company of colleagues from the Open Society Institute. British DCM also tells Embassy that he has spoken to Dr. Wykes, lawyer who feels confident that she will be granted the permission to leave Cabinda and arrive in Luanda on Friday, February 23, 2007.

Friday, February 23, 2007

AM

-- David Mendes, Dr. Wykes, lawyer, tells emboffs that he has consulted with the Angolan Attorney General and understands that the paperwork granting permission for Dr. Wykes, to respond to court proceedings has been signed and is awaiting release. This paperwork would allow Dr. Wykes to leave Cabinda and Angola

PM

-- British Ambassador during his periodic calls updating Ambassador Efird is less sanguine. They coordinate a strategy of political contacts in Luanda, with the British Ambassador making official calls and the US Ambassador reinforcing the message informally at an Angolan military reception for the USS Kauffman on Friday evening and with private phone calls on Saturday and Sunday, if Dr. Wykes must remain in the hotel in Cabinda, unable to travel to Luanda.

End Chronology of Events.

13. (SBU) Embassy will notify Washington if additional support is needed over the weekend.

EFIRD